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Application/Control Number: 08/973,306

Art Unit: 2834

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

Between the paragraph of claim 29 and the paragraph of claim 31, insert the following as a separate paragraph:

---30. (Cancelled)---.

In claim 55, line 9, after "covering" insert a comma.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: In the amendment filed 13 April 2004, applicant incorporates indicated allowable subject matter of claim 8 into independent claims 1, 19 and 20, and the subject matter of claim 32 into claim 29. The amendment to claim 55 overcomes the objection. The terminal disclaimer filed 24 March 2004 overcomes the double-patenting rejection of independent claim 42.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Burton S. Mullins whose telephone number is 571-272-2029. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Burton S. Mullins Primary Examiner Art Unit 2834

bsm

05 September 2004